

Amendments to the Specification

Please amend page 1, line 1, by inserting the following new paragraph:

This is a divisional application of copending application U.S. Serial No. 09/896,596 filed June 29, 2001, the entire disclosure of which is incorporated herein by reference.

Please amend the paragraph bridging pages 18 and 19 as follows:

As mentioned above, the support is normally delivered into the opening in the wall of the housing by engagement with a holding element, which usually comprises a main arm and an end portion that contacts and engages a surface of the support. In one embodiment the holding element is vacuum activated. The holding element may comprise at least two prongs and may be in the form of a fork. Other embodiments of the holding element include, for example, grasping elements such as movable finger-like projections, and the like. The holding element is usually part of a transfer robot that comprises a robotic arm that is capable ~~of~~ ~~or~~ transferring the support from various positions where steps in the synthesis of the chemical compound are performed such as between several flow devices in accordance with the present invention. In one embodiment a transfer robot is mounted on the main platform. The transfer robot may comprise a base, an arm that is movably mounted on the base, and an element for holding the support during transport that is attached to the arm.